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Message Text

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PAGE 01 PONTA 00208 120151Z

67
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SSO-00

/058 W
---------- 009384
P R 112320Z JUNE 75
FM AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1179
INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON
COMUSFOR AZ

C O N F I D E N T I A L PONTA DELGADA 208

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PO
SUBJECT: AZOREAN SITUATION

1. IN CONVERSATION AT MY HOUSE, LTC. MIRANDA, COMMANDER 18TH INFANTRY BATTALION, EXPLAINED HE HAD ORDERED ARREST OF VITOR CRUZ, HIS CHILDHOOD FRIEND, WITH TEARS IN HIS EYES. HE WAS SURE CRUZ HAD DONE NOTHING WRONG AND THAT HIS NAME WAS ON THE LIST BECAUSE HE WORKED FOR CONSULATE AND WAS ACCUSED OF BEING CIA AGENT. MIRANDA SAID JOSEF FRANCO, ANOTHER DETAINEE, WAS ALSO AN OLD FRIEND. HE TOLD US THAT COMMANDER OF THE NAVAL FORCES IN AZORES, RICCOU, HAD TELEGRAPHED ADM. ROSA COUTINHO DIRECTLY REQUESTING ARREST ORDER. WHEN ORDER RECEIVED, RICCOU HAD THREATENED TO STAGE COUP ARRESTING GEN. MAGALHAES, MIRANDA AND OTHERS IF ORDER NOT CARRIED OUT. MIRANDA CONCERNED THAT LISBON PAPERS ARE CALLING GENERAL MAGALHAES A FACIST AND MIRANDA A SPINOLISTA. MIRANDA EXPECTS TO BE "SANEA", BUT CONSIDERS THAT ALMOST AN HONOR TODAY.

2. MIRANDA WORRIED ABOUT DIRECTION OF EVENTS IN PORTUGAL. SAID HE HAD NOT PARTICIPATED IN APRIL 25 COUP TO HAVE THINGS TURN OUT THIS WAY. HE WAS ACCUSTOMED TO DEALING WITH COMMUNISTS AND RECOGNIZED THEIR HAND IN EVENTS IN
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LISBON AND ON SAO MIGUEL.

3. MIRANDA SAID THAT LARGE LAND OWNERS EXPLOIT THE RURAL POPULATION IN SAO MIGUEL, BUT NOT ON OTHER ISLANDS WHERE STATE OF ALMOST PURE SOCIALISM EXISTS AMONG SMALL FARMERS.

4. COMMENT: MIRANDA STRUCK US AS DEEPLY WORRIED MAN, BUT NOT READY TO STAGE A COUP. HE IS LOYAL PORTUGUESE SOLDIER, MORE LIBERAL THAN SEPARATISTS LEADERS.
AT SAME TIME HE IS TROUBLED BY EVENTS IN LISBON AND CONCERNED ABOUT AZOREAN SITUATION AND ABOUT HIS OWN FUTURE.
HE TOLD US HE HAS ASKED FOR A TRANSFER TO LISBON WHERE HE HAS HIS HOME.

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NNN

*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a
*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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